

# NEW ZEALAND DATA SHEET

## 1 NAME OF THE MEDICINE

Brintellix 5 mg, 10 mg, 15 mg, and 20 mg film coated tablets.

## 2 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE COMPOSITION

Each Brintellix tablet contains 6.355, 12.71, 19.065, or 25.42 mg of vortioxetine hydrobromide equivalent to 5, 10, 15, or 20 mg of vortioxetine, respectively.

Excipients with known effect: mannitol

For the full list of excipients, see section [6.1 List of excipients](#).

## 3 PHARMACEUTICAL FORM

*5 mg:* Pink, almond-shaped, biconvex film-coated tablet engraved with “TL” on one side and “5” on the other side.

*10 mg:* Yellow, almond-shaped, biconvex film-coated tablet engraved with “TL” on one side and “10” on the other side.

*15 mg:* Orange, almond-shaped, biconvex film-coated tablet engraved with “TL” on one side and “15” on the other side.

*20 mg:* Red, almond-shaped biconvex film-coated tablet engraved with “TL” on one side and “20” on the other side.

## 4 CLINICAL PARTICULARS

### 4.1 Therapeutic indications

Treatment of major depressive disorder in adults including prevention of relapse.

Vortioxetine is not indicated for paediatric use.

### 4.2 Dose and method of administration

The starting and recommended dose of Brintellix in adults less than 65 years of age is 10 mg once daily, taken with or without food. Depending on individual patient response, the dose may be increased to a maximum of 20 mg daily or reduced to a minimum of 5 mg daily.

An antidepressant effect of Brintellix based on the primary efficacy measure was generally observed starting at week 2. If the depressive symptoms resolve, treatment for at least 6 months is recommended for consolidation of the antidepressive response.

Physicians should periodically re-evaluate the usefulness of the drug for individual patients.

#### Treatment discontinuation

A gradual reduction in dosage may be considered to avoid the occurrence of discontinuation symptoms (see section [4.8 Undesirable effects](#)). However, there is insufficient data to provide specific recommendations for a tapering schedule for patients treated with Brintellix.

#### Missed Dose

If a dose is missed, the next dose should be taken at the usual time. Patients should not take a double dose to make up for a missed dose.

#### Special Populations

##### *Paediatric population*

Vortioxetine is not indicated for paediatric patients (under 18 years of age) with major depressive disorder (MDD) as efficacy has not been demonstrated. The safety of vortioxetine in paediatric

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patients with MDD is described in Sections [4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use](#) and [4.8 Undesirable effects](#).

## ***Elderly patients***

The recommended starting dose is 5 mg vortioxetine once daily and should always be used as the starting dose in patients  $\geq 65$  years of age. Caution is advised when treating patients  $\geq 65$  years of age with doses higher than 10 mg vortioxetine once daily.

## ***Patients with renal impairment***

No dose adjustment is recommended for patients with renal impairment or for patients with end-stage renal disease. However, as with any medicine, caution should be exercised when treating patients with severe renal insufficiency (see section [5.2 Pharmacokinetic properties](#)).

## ***Patients with hepatic impairment***

No dose adjustment is recommended for patients with hepatic impairment; however, caution should be exercised when prescribing to these patients (see section [5.2 Pharmacokinetic properties](#)).

## ***Cytochrome P450 inhibitors***

Depending on individual patient response, a lower dose of Brintellix may be considered if strong CYP2D6 inhibitors (e.g., bupropion) are added to Brintellix treatment.

## ***Cytochrome P450 inducers***

Depending on individual patient response, a dose adjustment of Brintellix may be considered if a broad cytochrome P450 inducer (e.g., rifampicin) is added to Brintellix treatment.

## **4.3 Contraindications**

Hypersensitivity to vortioxetine or any of the tablet excipients (see section [2 Qualitative and quantitative composition](#)).

### **Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors (MAOIs)**

Brintellix should not be used in combination with an MAOI, or within at least 14 days of discontinuing treatment with an MAOI. Brintellix should be discontinued for at least 14 days before starting treatment with an MAOI (see section [4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use](#) and section [4.5 Interaction with other medicines and other forms of interaction](#)).

## **4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use**

### **Clinical worsening and Suicide Risk**

The risk of suicide attempt is inherent in depression and may persist until significant remission occurs. This risk must be considered in all depressed patients.

Patients with depression may experience worsening of their depressive symptoms and/or the emergence of suicidal ideation and behaviours (suicidality) whether or not they are taking antidepressant medications, and this risk may persist until significant remission occurs. As improvement may not occur during the first few weeks or more of treatment, patients should be closely monitored for clinical worsening and suicidality, especially at the beginning of a course of treatment, or at the time of dose changes, either increases or decreases. Consideration should be given to changing the therapeutic regimen, including possibly discontinuing the medication, in patients whose depression is persistently worse or whose emergent suicidality is severe, abrupt in onset, or was not part of the patient's presenting symptoms.

Patients (and caregivers of patients) should be alerted about the need to monitor for any worsening of their condition and/or the emergence of suicidal ideation/behaviour or thoughts of harming themselves and to seek medical advice immediately if these symptoms are present.

Patients with comorbid depression associated with other psychiatric disorders being treated with antidepressants should be similarly observed for clinical worsening and suicidality.

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Patients with a history of suicide-related events, or those exhibiting a significant degree of suicidal ideation prior to commencement of treatment, are at greater risk of suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts and should receive careful monitoring during treatment.

Pooled analyses of 24 short-term (4 to 16-week), placebo-controlled studies of nine antidepressant medicines (SSRIs and others) in 4,400 children and adolescents with major depressive disorder (16 studies), obsessive-compulsive disorder (4 studies), or other psychiatric disorders (4 studies) have revealed a greater risk of adverse events representing suicidal behaviour or thinking (suicidality) during the first few months of treatment in those receiving antidepressants. The average risk of such events in patients treated with an antidepressant was 4%, compared with 2% of patients given placebo. There was considerable variation in risk among the antidepressants, but there was a tendency towards an increase for almost all antidepressants studied. The risk of suicidality was most consistently observed in the major depressive disorder studies, but there were signals of risk arising from studies in other psychiatric indications (obsessive-compulsive disorder and social anxiety disorder) as well. No suicides occurred in these studies. It is unknown whether the suicidality risk in children and adolescent patients extends to use beyond several months. The nine antidepressant medicines in the pooled analyses included five SSRIs (citalopram, fluoxetine, fluvoxamine, paroxetine, sertraline) and four non-SSRIs (bupropion, mirtazapine, nefazodone, venlafaxine).

Pooled analyses of short-term studies of antidepressant medications have also shown an increased risk of suicidal thinking and behaviour, known as suicidality, in young adults aged 18 to 24 years during initial treatment (generally the first one to two months). Short-term studies did not show an increase in the risk of suicidality with antidepressants compared to placebo in adults beyond the age of 24 years, and there was a reduction with antidepressants compared to placebo in adults aged 65 years and older.

Symptoms of anxiety, agitation, panic attacks, insomnia, irritability, hostility (aggressiveness), impulsivity, akathisia (psychomotor restlessness), hypomania, and mania, have been reported in adults, adolescents and children being treated with antidepressants for major depressive disorder as well as for other indications, both psychiatric and nonpsychiatric. Although a causal link between the emergence of such symptoms and either worsening of depression and/or emergence of suicidal impulses has not been established, there is concern that such symptoms may be precursors of emerging suicidality.

Families and caregivers of children and adolescents being treated with antidepressants for major depressive disorder or for any other condition (psychiatric or non-psychiatric) should be informed about the need to monitor these patients for the emergence of agitation, irritability, unusual changes in behaviour, and other symptoms described above, as well as the emergence of suicidality, and to report such symptoms to health care providers immediately. It is particularly important that monitoring be undertaken during the initial few months of antidepressant treatment or at times of dose increase or decrease.

Prescriptions for Brintellix should be written for the smallest quantity of tablets consistent with good patient management, in order to reduce the risk of overdose.

## **Serotonin syndrome/Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome (NMS)**

Development of serotonin syndrome /NMS, potentially life-threatening conditions, may occur in association with treatment with serotonergic antidepressants including vortioxetine. The risk of serotonin syndrome or NMS is increased with concomitant use of serotonergic active substances (including opioids and triptans) medicinal products that impair the metabolism of serotonin (including MAOIs), antipsychotics, and other dopamine antagonists. Patients should be monitored for the emergence of signs and symptoms of serotonin syndrome or NMS (see sections [4.3 Contraindications](#) and section [4.5 Interaction with other medicines and other forms of interaction](#)). Symptoms and signs of serotonin syndrome/NMS include rapid onset of neuromuscular excitation (hyperreflexia, incoordination, myoclonus, tremor), altered mental status (confusion, agitation, hypomania) and autonomic dysfunction (diaphoresis, diarrhoea, fever, shivering and rapidly fluctuating vital signs) and/or gastrointestinal symptoms (e.g., nausea, vomiting). Treatment with Brintellix should be discontinued if such events occur, and supportive symptomatic treatment initiated.

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## **Activation of Mania/Hypomania**

As with all drugs effective in the treatment of depression, Brintellix should be used with caution in patients with a history of mania/hypomania and should be discontinued in any patient entering a manic phase. A major depressive episode may be the initial presentation of bipolar disorder. It is generally believed that treating such an episode with an antidepressant alone can increase the likelihood of precipitation of a mixed/manic episode in patients at risk of bipolar disorder. Prior to initiating treatment with an antidepressant, patients should be adequately screened to determine if they are at risk for bipolar disorder; such screening should include a detailed psychiatric history, including a family history of suicide, bipolar disorder, and depression.

## **Aggression/agitation**

Patients treated with antidepressants, including vortioxetine, may also experience feelings of aggression, anger, agitation, and irritability. Patient's condition and disease status should be closely monitored. Patients (and caregivers of patients) should be alerted to seek medical advice, if aggressive/agitated behaviour emerges or aggravates.

## **Seizures**

Seizures are a potential risk with antidepressant drugs. Therefore, as with other antidepressants, Brintellix should be introduced cautiously in patients who have a history of seizures or in patients with unstable epilepsy (see section [4.5 Interaction with other medicines and other forms of interaction](#)).

Treatment should be discontinued in any patient who develops seizures or where there is an increase in seizure frequency.

## **Haemorrhage**

As with any antidepressant with serotonergic effect, including vortioxetine bleeding abnormalities, such as ecchymoses, purpura and gastrointestinal or gynaecological haemorrhage may occur. Antidepressants with serotonergic effects, including vortioxetine may increase the risk of postpartum haemorrhage. Caution is advised in patients taking anticoagulants and/or medicinal products known to affect platelet function (e.g., NSAIDs or aspirin) (see section [4.5 Interaction with other medicines and other forms of interaction](#)), and in patients with known bleeding tendencies.

## **Hyponatraemia**

Hyponatraemia, probably due to inappropriate antidiuretic hormone secretion (SIADH), has been reported rarely with the use of antidepressants with serotonergic effect. Caution should be exercised in patients at risk, such as elderly, cirrhotic patients or patients concomitantly treated with medications known to cause hyponatraemia.

## **Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)**

The safety and efficacy of the concurrent use of Brintellix and ECT have not been studied, and therefore, caution is advisable.

## **Sexual Dysfunction**

Use of serotonergic antidepressants, including Brintellix, may cause symptoms of sexual dysfunction. In male patients, serotonergic antidepressant use may result in ejaculatory delay or failure, decreased libido, and erectile dysfunction. In female patients, use may result in decreased libido and delayed or absent orgasm.

It is important for prescribers to inquire about sexual function prior to initiation of Brintellix and to inquire specifically about changes in sexual function during treatment, because sexual function may not be spontaneously reported. When evaluating changes in sexual function, obtaining a detailed history (including timing of symptom onset) is important because sexual symptoms may have other causes, including the underlying psychiatric disorder. Discuss potential management strategies to support patients in making informed decisions about treatment.

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## **Use in Patients with Concomitant Illness**

Brintellix has not been systematically evaluated in patients with a recent history of myocardial infarction or unstable heart disease, patients with psychiatric co-morbidities, neurological comorbidities, unstable medical illness or stroke. Patients with these diagnoses were generally excluded from clinical studies during the product's premarketing testing.

## **Use in hepatic impairment**

Pharmacokinetic data in subjects with hepatic impairment is available (see section [5.2 Pharmacokinetic properties](#)). No dose adjustment is needed based on hepatic function; however, caution should be exercised.

## **Use in renal impairment**

Limited data are available for patients with severe renal impairment. Caution should therefore be exercised (see section [4.2 Dose and method of administration](#)).

## **Angle-closure Glaucoma**

Antidepressants including BRINTELLIX may have an effect on pupil size resulting in mydriasis. This mydriatic effect has the potential to narrow the eye angle resulting in increased intraocular pressure and angle-closure glaucoma, especially in pre-disposed patients. BRINTELLIX should therefore be used with caution in patients with raised intraocular pressure and in those at risk of angle-closure glaucoma.

## **Use in the elderly**

The recommended starting dose is 5 mg vortioxetine once daily in patients  $\geq 65$  years of age (see section [4.2 Dose and method of administration](#)).

## **Paediatric use**

Brintellix is not recommended for the treatment of depression in paediatric patients (under 18 years of age) since the safety and/or efficacy of Brintellix has not been established in this age group (see section [5.1 Pharmacokinetic properties, Paediatric population](#)). In general, the adverse reaction profile of vortioxetine in children and adolescents was similar to that seen for adults except for a higher incidence of abdominal pain-related events, and a higher incidence of suicidal ideation in adolescents specifically, compared to adults.

In clinical studies among children and adolescents treated with other antidepressants, suicide-related behaviour (suicide attempt and suicidal thoughts), and hostility (predominantly aggression, oppositional behaviour and anger) were more frequently observed compared to those treated with placebo.

## **Effects on laboratory tests**

Interference with urine drug screens: There have been reports of false positive results in urine enzyme immunoassays for methadone in patients who have taken vortioxetine. Caution should be exercised in the interpretation of positive urine drug screen results, and confirmation by an alternative analytical technique (e.g., chromatographic methods) should be considered.

## **4.5 Interaction with other medicines and other forms of interaction**

Brintellix is extensively metabolised in the liver primarily through oxidation and subsequent glucuronic acid conjugation. *In vitro* studies indicate that the cytochrome P450 isozymes CYP2D6, CYP3A4/5, CYP2C19, CYP2C9, CYP2A6, CYP2C8 and CYP2B6 are involved in the metabolism of vortioxetine (see section [5.2 Pharmacokinetic properties](#)).

## **Potential for other medicinal products to affect Brintellix**

### ***Irreversible non-selective MAOIs***

Due to the risk of serotonin syndrome, Brintellix is contraindicated in any combination with irreversible non-selective MAOIs. For patients changing treatment regimens, Brintellix must not be initiated for at least 14 days after discontinuation of treatment with an irreversible non-selective

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MAOI. Brintellix must be discontinued for at least 14 days before starting treatment with an irreversible non-selective MAOI (see section [4.3 Contraindications](#)).

### ***Reversible, selective MAO-A inhibitor (moclobemide)***

The combination of Brintellix with a reversible and selective MAO-A inhibitor (RIMA), such as moclobemide, is not recommended. A latent period of at least 24 hours after the last dose of moclobemide should be introduced before changing treatment to Brintellix. Moclobemide should not be used for at least 14 days after discontinuation of Brintellix (see section [4.3 Contraindications](#)).

### ***Reversible, non-selective MAOI (linezolid)***

The antibiotic linezolid is a weak reversible and non-selective MAOI and should not be given to patients treated with Brintellix. Linezolid should not be used for at least 14 days after discontinuation of Brintellix (see section [4.3 Contraindications](#)).

### ***Irreversible, selective MAO-B inhibitor (selegiline, rasagiline)***

Although a lower risk of serotonin syndrome is expected with selective MAO-B inhibitors as compared with MAO-A inhibitors, the combination of Brintellix with selegiline or rasagiline should be exercised with caution. MAO-B inhibitors should not be used for at least 14 days after discontinuation of Brintellix (see section [4.3 Contraindications](#)).

### ***Serotonergic medicinal products***

Co-administration with medicinal products that may affect the serotonergic neurotransmitter systems, such as serotonin reuptake inhibitors, lithium, St. John's Wort, dextromethorphan, opioids (including tramadol) and triptans (including sumatriptan) may lead to serotonin syndrome (see section [4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use](#)).

### ***St. John's Wort***

Concomitant use of antidepressants with serotonergic effect and herbal remedies containing St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) may result in an increased incidence of adverse reactions including serotonin syndrome (see section [4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use](#)).

### ***Medicinal products lowering the seizure threshold***

Antidepressants with serotonergic effect can lower the seizure threshold. Caution is advised when concomitantly using other medicinal products capable of lowering the seizure threshold (e.g. antidepressants (tricyclics, SSRIs, SNRIs), neuroleptics (phenothiazines, thioxanthenes and butyrophenones), mefloquine, bupropion and tramadol) (see section [4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use](#)).

### ***ECT (electroconvulsive therapy)***

There is no clinical experience of concurrent administration of Brintellix and ECT, therefore caution is advisable.

### ***Cytochrome P450 inhibitors***

The exposure to vortioxetine increased 2.3-fold for AUC when Brintellix 10 mg/day was co-administered with bupropion (a strong CYP2D6 inhibitor) 150 mg b.i.d. for 14 days in 44 healthy subjects. The co-administration resulted in a higher incidence of adverse events when bupropion was added to Brintellix than when Brintellix was added to bupropion. Depending on individual patient response, a lower dose of Brintellix may be considered if strong CYP2D6 inhibitors (e.g., bupropion) are added to Brintellix treatment (see section [4.2 Dose and method of administration](#)).

When Brintellix was co-administered following 6 days of ketoconazole 400 mg/day (a CYP3A4/5 and P-glycoprotein inhibitor) in 17 healthy subjects, a 1.3-fold increase in vortioxetine AUC was observed. No dose adjustment is needed.

When Brintellix was co-administered following 6 days of fluconazole 200 mg/day (a CYP2C9, CYP2C19 and CYP3A4/5 inhibitor) in 16 healthy subjects, a 1.5-fold increase in AUC was observed. No dose adjustment is needed.

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## ***Cytochrome P450 inducers***

When a single dose of 20 mg Brintellix was co-administered following 10 days of rifampicin 600 mg/day (a broad inducer of CYP isozymes) in 14 healthy subjects, a 72% decrease in AUC of Brintellix was observed. Depending on individual patient response, a dose adjustment may be considered (see section [4.2 Dose and method of administration](#)).

## **Potential for Brintellix to affect other medicinal products**

### ***Anticoagulants and antiplatelet agents***

No significant effects, relative to placebo, were observed in INR, prothrombin or plasma R-/S-warfarin values following co-administration of 10 mg/day vortioxetine for 14 days with stable doses of warfarin in 52 healthy subjects. Also, no significant inhibitory effect, relative to placebo, on platelet aggregation was observed when aspirin 150 mg/day was co-administered following 14 days of Brintellix 10 mg/day administration in 28 healthy subjects. However, as for other serotonergic agents, caution should be exercised when vortioxetine is combined with oral anticoagulants or antiplatelet agents due to a potential increased risk of bleeding attributable to a pharmacodynamic interaction (see section [4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use](#)).

### ***Lithium, tryptophan***

No clinically relevant effect was observed during steady-state lithium exposure following co-administration with Brintellix 10 mg/day for 14 days in 16 healthy subjects. However, there have been reports of enhanced effects when antidepressants with serotonergic effect have been given together with lithium or tryptophan, therefore concomitant use of vortioxetine with these medicinal products should be undertaken with caution.

### ***Alcohol***

Overall, no impairment, relative to placebo, in cognitive function using a battery of neuropsychological tests was observed for Brintellix single doses of 20 and 40 mg following co-administration with a single dose of ethanol 0.6 g/kg in 55 healthy subjects.

### ***Diazepam***

No significant impairment, relative to placebo, in cognitive function using a battery of neuropsychological tests was observed for vortioxetine following co-administration of Brintellix 10 mg/day with a single 10 mg dose of diazepam in 32 healthy subjects.

### ***Oral contraceptives***

No significant effects, relative to placebo, were observed in the levels of sex hormones following co-administration of Brintellix 10 mg/day with a combined oral contraceptive (ethinyl estradiol 30 µg/levonorgestrel 150 µg) in 25 healthy women for 21 days.

### ***Cytochrome P450 substrates***

*In vitro*, vortioxetine did not show any relevant potential for inhibition or induction of cytochrome P450 isozymes.

No inhibitory effect of vortioxetine (10 mg/day for 14 days) was observed in healthy subjects for the cytochrome P450 isozymes CYP2C19 (omeprazole, diazepam), CYP2C9 (warfarin), CYP3A4/5 (ethinyl estradiol), or CYP2B6 (bupropion). In a drug-drug interaction study in healthy subjects, no inhibitory effect of vortioxetine 10 mg/day for 14 days was observed for CYP2C9 (tolbutamide), CYP1A2 (caffeine), or CYP3A4/5 (midazolam), while CYP2D6 (dextromethorphan) was affected, the decrease in dextromethorphan levels was not considered clinically meaningful.

## **4.6 Fertility, pregnancy and lactation**

### **Effects on fertility**

Vortioxetine given prior to and during mating, and in early pregnancy at oral doses achieving exposures 20 times the maximum recommended human dose had no effect on rat fertility, mating performance, or on sperm morphology and motility.

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## Use in pregnancy – Pregnancy Category B3

Brintellix should only be administered to pregnant women if the expected benefits outweigh the potential risk to the foetus. There are no or limited data (fewer than 300 pregnancy outcomes) from the use of vortioxetine in pregnant women.

In studies in which vortioxetine was administered to rats and rabbits during organogenesis, reduced foetal weight and delayed ossification was observed. In rats, these findings were observed at a vortioxetine exposure (plasma AUC) 30-fold or greater than that achieved at the maximum recommended human dose. No increased incidence of foetal malformations was noted. In rabbits, doses associated with delayed ossification, although resulting in vortioxetine exposures (plasma AUC) comparable to that at the maximum recommended human dose, were maternotoxic. In rabbits, an increased incidence of runts was observed at a vortioxetine exposure about 3-fold that at the maximum recommended human dose. A pre- and postnatal study in rats showed reduced pup survival during the lactation period at exposures (plasma AUC) 8-fold or greater than those achieved at the maximum recommended human dose.

The following symptoms may occur in newborns exposed to serotonergic agents in later stages of pregnancy: respiratory distress, cyanosis, apnoea, seizures, temperature instability, feeding difficulty, vomiting, hypoglycaemia, hypertonia, hypotonia, hyperreflexia, tremor, jitteriness, irritability, lethargy, constant crying, somnolence and difficulty sleeping. These symptoms could be due to either discontinuation effects or excess serotonergic activity. In a majority of instances, such complications begin immediately or soon (<24 hours) after delivery.

Epidemiological data suggest that the use of SSRIs in pregnancy, particularly in late pregnancy, may increase the risk of persistent pulmonary hypertension in the newborn (PPHN). Although no studies have investigated the association of PPHN with vortioxetine treatment, this potential risk cannot be ruled out taking into account the related mechanism of action (increase in serotonin concentrations).

Observational data have provided evidence of an increased risk (less than 2-fold) of postpartum haemorrhage following exposure to an SSRI or SNRI within the month prior to birth. Although no studies have investigated an association between vortioxetine treatment and postpartum haemorrhage, there is a potential risk, taking into account the related mechanism of action (see section [4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use](#)).

## Use in lactation

In nonclinical studies vortioxetine-related material was excreted in the milk of lactating rats.

Vortioxetine is excreted in small amounts into human breast milk. The relative infant dose (RID) was below 2%. No harmful, drug-associated effects have been observed in the infants. Consequently, breast-feeding is not recommended during treatment.

## 4.7 Effects on ability to drive and use machines

No significant impairment, relative to placebo, in driving performance, cognitive function or other psychomotor skills, was observed when 21 healthy subjects were administered single and multiple doses of 10 mg/day Brintellix. However, as with any psychoactive drug, patients should exercise caution when driving or operating hazardous machinery especially when starting treatment with Brintellix or when changing the dose.

## 4.8 Undesirable effects

Adverse events information for Brintellix was collected in patients with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) in a clinical programme that included more than 6,700 patients, of whom 3,460 were treated with Brintellix (5 to 20 mg/day) in short-term placebo-controlled (up to 8 weeks) studies.

During clinical studies, all treatment groups were comparable with respect to gender, age, and race. The mean age of patients was 46 years (18 to 88 years). Of these patients, approximately 67% were females and 33% were males.

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## Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) Short Term Studies in Adults and Elderly

Adverse events that occurred in Brintellix treated patients in the course of the MDD short-term, placebo-controlled studies with an incidence  $\geq 10\%$  were headache and nausea. The incidence of headache was 13.2% with Brintellix and 12.9% with placebo, which suggests that this is a non-specific symptom related to the underlying condition or treatment administration. The incidence of nausea was higher with Brintellix (24.1%) compared to the lower rates of nausea in the placebo group (8.1%). The majority of cases of nausea in the MDD Short-Term studies were transient and mild to moderate and did not generally lead to cessation of therapy. Gastrointestinal adverse reactions, such as nausea, occurred more frequently in women than men.

In the MDD short-term studies, discontinuation due to adverse events was more common with Brintellix (6.0%) compared with placebo (4.0%). Nausea was the most common reason for patients discontinuing due to adverse events.

Table 1 enumerates the incidence of treatment emergent adverse events that occurred in the short-term placebo-controlled studies. Events included are those occurring in 1% or more of patients treated with Brintellix (5 to 20 mg/day), and for which the incidence in patients treated with vortioxetine was greater than the incidence in placebo-treated patients.

<b>TABLE 1</b>					
<b>INCIDENCE OF COMMON ADVERSE EVENTS</b>					
<b>FOR MAJOR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER, POOL OF 12 SHORT-TERM STUDIES</b>					
<b>Body System/Adverse Event</b>	<b>Percentage of Patients Reporting</b>				
	<b>Brintellix 5 mg/day (n=1157)</b>	<b>Brintellix 10 mg/day (n=1042)</b>	<b>Brintellix 15 mg/day (n=449)</b>	<b>Brintellix 20 mg/day (n=812)</b>	<b>Placebo (n=1968)</b>
<i>Gastrointestinal Disorders</i>					
Nausea	20.5	22.6	31.2	27.2	8.1
Diarrhoea	6.6	5.4	9.4	5.5	5.5
Dry mouth	6.4	5.5	6.0	6.5	5.6
Constipation	3.4	3.6	5.6	4.4	2.9
Vomiting	2.7	3.6	6.5	4.4	1.1
Dyspepsia	1.8	1.7	2.4	2.1	1.9
Flatulence	1.0	1.9	2.0	0.9	1.2
Abdominal discomfort	1.4	0.6	2.0	1.6	1.1
<i>General Disorders and Administration Site Conditions</i>					
Fatigue	3.1	2.8	3.6	2.6	2.7
<i>Infections and Infestations</i>					
Nasopharyngitis	5.3	4.0	3.6	4.9	3.9
Influenza	1.5	1.6	0.9	0.4	1.1
<i>Injury, poisoning and procedural complications</i>					
Accidental overdose	1.3	1.2	1.3	0.9	1.0
<i>Metabolism and Nutrition Disorders</i>					
Decreased appetite	2.1	0.7	0.7	1.6	1.0
<i>Musculoskeletal and Connective Tissue Disorders</i>					
Back Pain	2.2	2.1	1.8	1.1	1.8
Arthralgia	0.9	0.9	1.8	1.1	0.9
<i>Nervous System</i>					
Headache	13.7	12.7	14.7	12.4	12.9
Dizziness	5.5	5.2	7.1	6.3	5.3
Somnolence	3.3	2.9	2.7	3.3	2.3

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Body System/Adverse Event	Percentage of Patients Reporting				
	Brintellix 5 mg/day (n=1157)	Brintellix 10 mg/day (n=1042)	Brintellix 15 mg/day (n=449)	Brintellix 20 mg/day (n=812)	Placebo (n=1968)
Sedation	1.2	0.5	1.3	1.5	0.6
<i>Psychiatric Disorders</i>					
Insomnia	3.1	2.6	1.8	2.7	2.5
<i>Skin and Subcutaneous Tissue Disorders</i>					
Hyperhidrosis	2.3	2.3	1.8	0.7	1.7
Pruritus generalised	0.4	1.3	1.6	1.8	0.4

### **Male and Female Sexual Dysfunction**

Difficulties in sexual desire, sexual performance and sexual satisfaction often occur as manifestations of psychiatric disorders, but they may also be a consequence of pharmacologic treatment.

In the MDD 6-to-8-week placebo-controlled clinical studies with Brintellix, voluntarily reported adverse reactions related to sexual dysfunction were captured as individual event terms. These event terms have been aggregated and the incidence was 1.6% for Brintellix (5-20 mg; n=3460) compared to 0.9% for placebo (n=1968).

Because voluntarily reported adverse sexual reactions are known to be underreported, in part because patients and physicians may be reluctant to discuss them, the Arizona Sexual Experiences Scale (ASEX), a validated measure designed to identify sexual side effects, was used prospectively in seven placebo-controlled trials. The ASEX scale includes five questions that pertain to the following aspects of sexual function: 1) sex drive, 2) ease of arousal, 3) ability to achieve erection (men) or lubrication (women), 4) ease of reaching orgasm, and 5) orgasm satisfaction.

The presence or absence of sexual dysfunction among patients entering clinical studies was based on their ASEX scores. For patients without sexual dysfunction at baseline (approximately 1/3 of the population across all treatment groups in each study), *Table 2* shows the incidence of patients that developed treatment-emergent sexual dysfunction (TESD) when treated with Brintellix or placebo in any fixed dose group. Physicians should routinely inquire about possible sexual side effects.

	Brintellix 5 mg/day N=65:67 <sup>†</sup>	Brintellix 10 mg/day N=94:86 <sup>†</sup>	Brintellix 15 mg/day N=57:67 <sup>†</sup>	Brintellix 20 mg/day N=67:59 <sup>†</sup>	Placebo (n=1968) N=135:162 <sup>†</sup>
Females	22%	23%	33%	34%	20%
Males	16%	20%	19%	29%	14%

*\*Incidence based on number of subjects with sexual dysfunction during the study / number of subjects without sexual dysfunction at baseline. Sexual dysfunction was defined as a subject scoring any of the following on the ASEX scale at two consecutive visits during the study: 1) total score  $\geq 19$ ; 2) any single item  $\geq 5$ ; 3) three or more items each with a score  $\geq 4$ .*

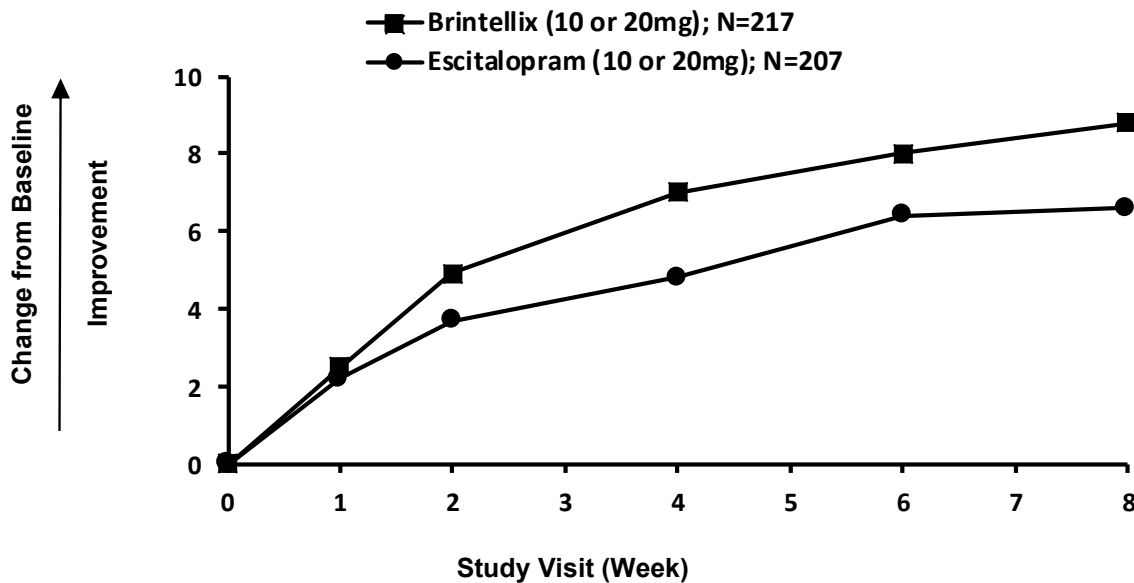
*<sup>†</sup>Sample size for each dose group is the number of patients (females:males) without sexual dysfunction at baseline.*

The effect of vortioxetine on sexual function was further evaluated in an 8-week, double-blind, flexible-dose, comparative study (n=424) versus escitalopram in patients treated for at least 6 weeks with an SSRI (citalopram, paroxetine, or sertraline), with a low level of depressive symptoms

# NEW ZEALAND DATA SHEET

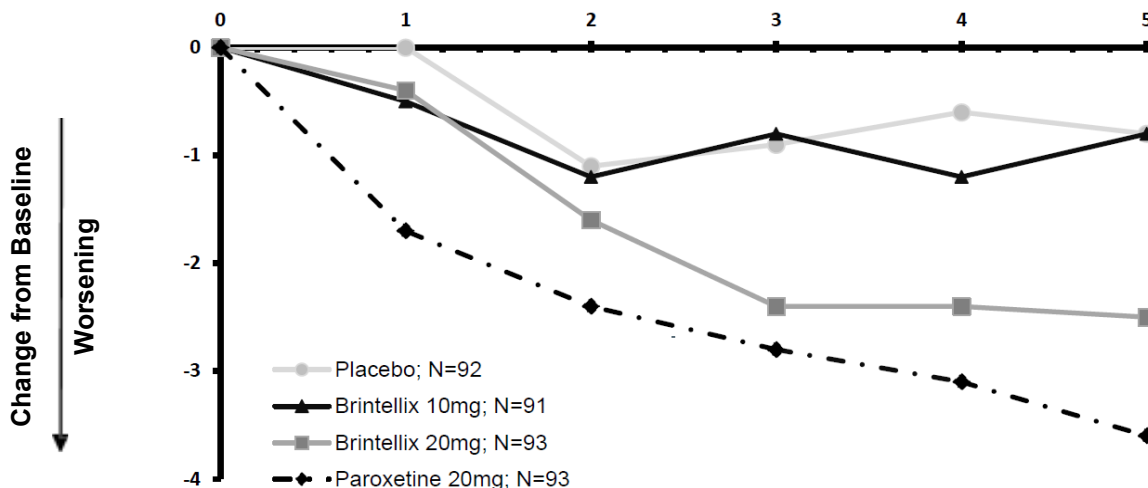
(baseline CGI-S  $\leq 3$ ) and TESD induced by the prior SSRI treatment. Vortioxetine 10-20 mg/day had statistically significantly less TESD than escitalopram 10-20 mg/day as measured by change in the CSFQ-14 total score (2.2 points,  $p=0.013$ ) at week 8. The proportion of responders was not significantly different in the vortioxetine group (162 (74.7%)) compared with the escitalopram group (137 (66.2%)) at week 8 (OR 1.5  $p=0.057$ ). The antidepressant effect was maintained in both treatment groups. In an 8-week, double-blind, flexible-dose, comparative study in patients with a low level of depressive symptoms (baseline CGI-S  $\leq 3$ ) and TESD induced by prior SSRI treatment (citalopram, paroxetine, or sertraline), vortioxetine 10-20 mg/day was statistically significantly better than escitalopram 10-20 mg/day in improving the SSRI-induced TESD as measured by improvement in the CSFQ-14 total score (2.2 points,  $p=0.013$ ). Patients in both treatment groups had similar maintenance of antidepressant effect. See Figure 1 Change from Baseline in CSFQ-14 Total Score by Study Visit (Week).

**Figure 1 Change from Baseline in CSFQ-14 Total Score by Study Visit (Week)**



In a 5-week, double-blind, placebo- and paroxetine-controlled study in healthy subjects with normal sexual functioning, without the confounding effect of depression, vortioxetine 10 mg/day (2.74 points,  $p=0.009$ ) was statistically significantly better than paroxetine 20 mg/day as measured by change in the CSFQ-14 total score, whereas vortioxetine 20 mg/day was not (1.05 points,  $p=0.303$ ). Neither vortioxetine 10 mg/day nor 20 mg/day were significantly worse than placebo. See Figure 2.

**Figure 2 Change from Baseline in CSFQ-14 Total Score by Study Visit (Week)**



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## Study Visit (Week)

### *Insomnia*

Although insomnia is common in patients with depression, either as part of the disease or as an adverse effect of antidepressants, for vortioxetine, the reporting of adverse events related to insomnia and poor-quality sleep is low and similar to placebo. Side-effects related to insomnia or poor-quality sleep may affect treatment adherence.

Table 3 shows the percentage of reported adverse reactions related to insomnia or poor sleep quality in the short-term studies in patients with MDD.

<b>TABLE 3</b>		
<b>INCIDENCE OF INSOMNIA RELATED SIDE EFFECTS IN A POOL OF 12 PLACEBO-CONTROLLED CLINICAL STUDIES FOR MAJOR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER</b>		
<b>Adverse Event</b>	<b>Percentage of Patients Reporting</b>	
	<b>Brintellix (5-20 mg) (n =3460)</b>	<b>Placebo (n = 1968)</b>
Insomnia	2.7	2.5
Initial insomnia	0.5	0.3
Sleep disorder	0.2	0.4
Middle insomnia	0.3	0.3
Poor quality sleep	<0.1	0.3
Dyssomnia	<0.1	0.1
Terminal insomnia	<0.1	0.0

### *Discontinuation symptoms*

In the clinical studies, discontinuation symptoms were systematically evaluated following abrupt cessation of vortioxetine treatment. There was no clinically relevant difference to placebo in the incidence or nature of the discontinuation symptoms after treatment with vortioxetine. Cases describing discontinuation symptoms have been reported in the post-marketing setting and have included symptoms such as dizziness, headache, sensory disturbances (including paraesthesia, electric shock sensations), sleep disturbances (including insomnia), nausea and/or vomiting, anxiety, irritability, agitation, fatigue and tremor. These symptoms may occur within the first week of vortioxetine discontinuation.

### *Weight*

Brintellix was not associated with weight gain (<1 kg) in either short or long-term clinical studies.

### *Cardiovascular*

Brintellix was not associated with clinically significant effects on vital signs or the ECG. In a randomised, placebo- and positive-controlled, parallel group, thorough QTc study in 340 healthy subjects, treatment with Brintellix 10 or 40 mg/day for 14 days did not prolong the QTc interval.

### **Adverse Events during Treatment up to 64 weeks**

The adverse event profile of Brintellix in a longer-term study in patients with MDD consisting of a 24 to 64-week placebo-controlled relapse observation phase in remitters after a preceding 12-week acute treatment phase was similar to that observed in short-term studies.

During long-term, double-blind treatment the overall incidence of Treatment-Emergent Adverse Events (TEAEs) was 62% for Brintellix and 64% for placebo. Table 4 enumerates the incidence of TEAEs that occurred in 204 depressed patients who received Brintellix at 5 or 10 mg/day for 24 to 64 weeks. Events included are those occurring in 2% or more of patients treated with Brintellix, and for which the incidence in patients treated with Brintellix was greater than the incidence in placebo-treated patients.

## NEW ZEALAND DATA SHEET

<b>TABLE 4</b>		
<b>INCIDENCE OF ADVERSE EVENTS <math>\geq</math>2% FOR DOUBLE-BLIND PERIOD OF MDD RELAPSE PREVENTION STUDY</b>		
<b>Adverse Event</b>	<b>Percentage of Patients Reporting</b>	
	<b>Brintellix 5 or 10 mg (n =204)</b>	<b>Placebo (n = 192)</b>
Nausea	8.8	3.1
Influenza	6.9	5.2
Gastroenteritis	5.4	3.1
Abdominal pain upper	4.9	1.0
Insomnia	2.5	1.6
Dry mouth	2.0	0.0
Back pain	2.0	0.5
Asthenia	2.0	0.5

### **Less Common Clinical Study Adverse Drug Reactions**

The events listed below present treatment emergent adverse events occurring in less than 1% of the patients treated with Brintellix (5 to 20 mg/day) in 12 short-term placebo-controlled studies in depressed patients (n=3460). The listing does not include events:

1) already listed in previous tables or elsewhere in labelling, 2) for which a drug cause was remote, 3) which were so general as to be uninformative, 4) which were not considered to have significant clinical implications, or 5) which occurred at a rate equal to or less than placebo.

The events are categorised by body system according to the following definitions: Uncommon adverse reactions are those occurring in 1/100 to 1/1000 patients; rare reactions are those occurring in less than 1/1000 patients.

#### ***Ear and Labyrinth Disorders***

*Uncommon:* Vertigo

#### ***Eye Disorders***

*Uncommon:* Dry eye

*Rare:* Mydriasis (which may lead to acute narrow angle glaucoma- see section [4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use](#))

#### ***Gastrointestinal Disorders***

*Uncommon:* Abdominal distension, gastritis, epigastric discomfort, salivary hypersecretion

#### ***General Disorders and Administration Site Conditions***

*Uncommon:* Chest discomfort, malaise

#### ***Investigations***

*Uncommon:* Weight increased, electrocardiogram QT prolonged, heart rate increased, low density lipoprotein increased, blood cholesterol increased, blood triglycerides increased

#### ***Nervous System***

*Uncommon:* Dysgeusia, lethargy, tremor, myoclonus, formication

#### ***Psychiatric Disorders***

*Uncommon:* Tension, bruxism, abnormal dreams, restlessness, derealisation

#### ***Renal and Urinary Disorders***

*Uncommon:* Micturition urgency, nocturia

#### ***Skin and Subcutaneous Tissue Disorders***

*Uncommon:* Pruritus, night sweats, rash

#### ***Vascular Disorders***

*Uncommon:* Flushing, hypotension

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## **Post-market adverse drug reactions**

The following adverse events have been identified during post-approval use of BRINTELLIX. These events are reported voluntarily from a population of uncertain size.

### ***Nervous system disorders***

Serotonin syndrome

### ***Skin and subcutaneous tissue disorders***

Angioedema, Urticaria, Rash

### ***Immune system disorders***

Anaphylactic reaction

### ***Endocrine disorders***

Hyperprolactinaemia

### ***Vascular disorders***

Haemorrhage (including contusion, ecchymosis, epistaxis, gastrointestinal or vaginal bleeding)

### ***Metabolism and nutrition disorders***

Hyponatraemia

### ***Psychiatric Disorders***

Agitation, aggression

### ***General Disorders and Administration Site Conditions***

Discontinuation syndrome

### ***Paediatric population***

In general, the adverse reaction profile of vortioxetine in children and adolescents in clinical studies was similar to that observed in adults except for a higher incidence of abdominal pain-related events, and a higher incidence of suicidal ideation in adolescents specifically, compared to adults (see Section [5.1 Pharmacodynamic properties](#) - Clinical trials for further details).

Brintellix is not indicated for use in patients below the age of 18 years.

## **Reporting of suspected adverse reactions**

Reporting suspected adverse reactions after authorisation of the medicine is important. It allows continued monitoring of the benefit/risk balance of the medicine. Healthcare professionals are asked to report any suspected adverse reactions <https://pophealth.my.site.com/carmreportnz/s/>

## **4.9 Overdose**

In clinical studies no patients ingested more than 75 mg vortioxetine on a single occasion. The clinical studies included subjects who were administered 40 to 75 mg. Ingestion of vortioxetine in this dose range caused an aggravation of the following adverse events: nausea, postural dizziness, diarrhoea, abdominal discomfort, generalized pruritus, somnolence and flushing.

Post-marketing experience mainly concerns vortioxetine overdoses of up to 80 mg. In the majority of cases, no symptoms or mild symptoms were reported. The most frequently reported symptoms were nausea and vomiting.

There is limited experience with vortioxetine overdoses above 80 mg. Following dosages several fold higher than the therapeutic dose range, events of seizure and serotonin syndrome have been reported.

Management of overdose should consist of treatment of clinical symptoms and relevant monitoring. Medical follow-up in a specialised environment is recommended.

For risk assessment and advice on the management of overdose please contact the National Poisons Centre on 0800 POISON (0800 764 766).

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## 5 PHARMACOLOGICAL PROPERTIES

### 5.1 Pharmacodynamic properties

Pharmacotherapeutic group: Nervous system, Psychoanaleptics, Antidepressants, Other antidepressants, ATC code: N06AX26

#### Mechanism of action

The mechanism of action of vortioxetine is thought to be related to its multimodal activity, which is a combination of two pharmacological modes of action: direct modulation of receptor activity and inhibition of the serotonin transporter. *In vitro* studies indicate that vortioxetine is a 5-HT<sub>3</sub>, 5-HT<sub>7</sub>, and 5-HT<sub>1D</sub> receptor antagonist, 5-HT<sub>1B</sub> receptor partial agonist, 5-HT<sub>1A</sub> receptor agonist and inhibitor of the 5-HT transporter (5-HTT).

The precise contribution of the individual targets to the observed pharmacodynamic profile remains unclear. However, data from nonclinical serotonergic receptor and transporter occupancy studies coupled with neuronal firing and microdialysis studies suggest that the targets interact in a complex fashion, leading to modulation of neurotransmission in several systems, including serotonin, norepinephrine, dopamine, histamine, acetylcholine, gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) and glutamate systems within the forebrain. These multimodal pharmacological actions are thought to be responsible for the antidepressant effects of vortioxetine.

#### Pharmacodynamics

Vortioxetine shows antidepressant- and anxiolytic-like effects in some animal models (e.g., forced swim, conditioned fear-induced vocalisation, social interaction, marble burying and novelty-induced suppression of feeding tests). It is also effective in the models tested that are predictive of an enhanced effect on cognitive function (learning and memory) (e.g., contextual fear conditioning test and restoration of performance deficits induced by 5-HT depletion in the novel object recognition and Y-maze spontaneous alternation tests). In addition, in a sexual behavioural study in male rats at an oral dose achieving a vortioxetine plasma exposure similar to that at the maximum recommended human dose, vortioxetine did not induce sexual dysfunction.

In humans, two positron emission tomography (PET) studies have been performed using 5-HTT ligands (<sup>11</sup>C]-MADAM or [<sup>11</sup>C]-DASB) to quantify the 5-HT transporter occupancy in the brain across different dose levels. The mean 5-HT transporter occupancy in the specific regions of interest was approximately 50% at 5 mg/day, 65% at 10 mg/day and increased to above 80% at 20 mg/day. Vortioxetine has shown clinical antidepressant effects at 5-HT transporter occupancies as low as 50%.

#### Clinical trials

##### ***Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) Short Term Studies in Adults including Elderly***

The efficacy and safety of Brintellix have been studied in a clinical program that included more than 6,700 patients, of whom more than 3,700 were treated with Brintellix in short-term (≤12 weeks) studies in major depressive disorder (MDD). Twelve double-blind, placebo controlled, 6/8-week, fixed-dose studies have been conducted to investigate the short-term efficacy of Brintellix in MDD both in adults and in the elderly. The efficacy of Brintellix was demonstrated across 9 of the 12 studies, as measured by improvement in the Montgomery and Åsberg Depression Rating Scale (MADRS) or Hamilton Depression Rating Scale 24-item (HAM-D<sub>24</sub>) total score and supported by clinical relevance as demonstrated by the proportions of responders and remitters and the improvement in Clinical Global Impression – Global Improvement (CGI-I) score.

In each of the 8 short-term studies in adults that demonstrated statistical superiority the effect seen with Brintellix ranged from 2.4 to 7.2 points difference to placebo in MADRS total score at week 6/8 mixed model repeated measures (MMRM) analysis. The antidepressant effect in the individual studies was supported by the meta-analysis using MMRM of the mean change from baseline in MADRS total score at Week 6/8 in the short-term, placebo-controlled studies in adults. In the meta-analysis, the overall mean difference to placebo across the studies was statistically significant: -2.3 points (p = 0.007), -3.6 points (p <0.001), and -4.6 points (p <0.001) for the 5, 10, and 20 mg/day

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doses, respectively; the 15 mg/day dose did not separate statistically from placebo in the meta-analysis, but the mean difference to placebo was -2.6 points. The efficacy of Brintellix increased with increasing dose.

The efficacy of Brintellix is supported by the pooled responder analysis, in which the proportion of responders ranged from 46% to 49% for vortioxetine versus 34% for placebo ( $p < 0.01$ ; NRI analysis). Furthermore Brintellix, in the dose range of 5-20 mg/day, demonstrated efficacy on the broad range of depressive symptoms (assessed by improvement in all MADRS single-item scores).

In a 12-week, double-blind, flexible-dose, comparative study in patients with moderate to severe depression who switched antidepressant treatment after an inadequate response to one therapy with SSRI/SNRI for the current episode, Brintellix 10-20 mg/day was statistically significantly better ( $p = 0.002$ ) than agomelatine 25-50 mg/day as measured by improvement in the MADRS total score.

In a short-term study, in adults, Brintellix (10 and 20 mg/day) was superior to placebo ( $p < 0.001$ ) on the primary outcome measure, a composite cognition score consisting of two neuropsychological tests: a neuropsychological test of executive function, processing speed, and attention, the Digit Symbol Substitution Test (DSST) and a test of learning and memory, the Rey Auditory Verbal Learning Test (RAVLT).

### ***MDD Long term relapse prevention***

The maintenance of antidepressant efficacy was demonstrated in a relapse-prevention study. Patients in remission after an initial 12-week open-label treatment period with Brintellix were randomised to Brintellix 5 or 10 mg/day or placebo and observed for relapse during a double-blind period of at least 24 weeks (24 to 64 weeks). A total of 639 patients were treated with open-label Brintellix. Four hundred (62.6%) patients achieved remission and entered the double-blind treatment phase.

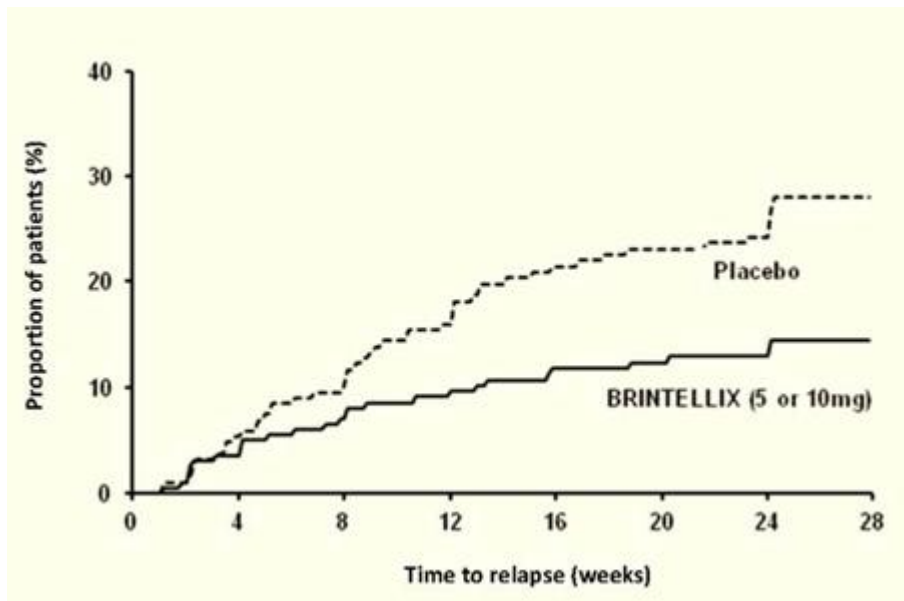
Remission was defined as MADRS total score  $\leq 10$ . Relapse was defined as a MADRS total score  $\geq 22$  or lack of efficacy, as judged by the investigator.

Brintellix was superior ( $p = 0.004$ ) to placebo on the primary outcome measure, the time to relapse of MDD with a hazard ratio of 2.0; that is, the risk of relapse was two times higher in the placebo group than in the Brintellix group.

Relapse rates during the first 24 weeks of the double-blind period were 13.2% in the combined 5 mg and 10 mg Brintellix groups and 26.0% in the placebo group. See Figure 3.

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**Figure 3 Time to Relapse within First 24 Weeks of Double-blind Period (FAS)**



## Other Clinical Efficacy Results

### *Elderly*

In the double-blind, placebo-controlled, 8-week, fixed-dose study in elderly ( $\geq 65$  years) depressed patients, Brintellix 5 mg/day was statistically significantly superior to placebo ( $p=0.001$ ) as measured by improvement in the HAM-D<sub>24</sub> and MADRS total scores.

### *Patients with Severe Depression or High Levels of Anxiety Symptoms*

In severely depressed patients (baseline MADRS total score  $\geq 30$ ) and in depressed patients with a high level of anxiety symptoms (baseline HAM-A total score  $\geq 20$ ) Brintellix also demonstrated efficacy in the short-term studies in adults (effect size ranged from 2.8 to 7.3 and from 3.6 to 7.3 points difference, respectively, to placebo in MADRS total score at week 6/8 (MMRM analysis)). In the dedicated study in elderly Brintellix was also effective in these patients. The maintenance of antidepressant efficacy was also demonstrated in this patient population in the long-term relapse prevention study.

## The Comparison of Vortioxetine and Escitalopram on Antidepressant Effects

In an 8-week, double-blind, flexible-dose, comparative study ( $n=424$ ) of vortioxetine versus escitalopram in patients treated for at least 6 weeks with an SSRI (citalopram, paroxetine, or sertraline), with a low level of depressive symptoms (baseline CGI-S  $\leq 3$ ) and TESD induced by the prior SSRI treatment, patients in both treatment groups had similar maintenance of antidepressant effect.

### *Paediatric population*

Two short-term, randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled, fixed-dose (vortioxetine 10 mg/day and 20 mg/day), active-referenced (fluoxetine), efficacy and safety studies have been conducted; one in children aged 7 to 11 years with MDD, and one in adolescent patients with MDD aged 12 to 17 years with MDD. The studies included a 4-week single-blind placebo lead-in period with standardized psychosocial intervention (treated patients in children study  $N=677$ , adolescent study  $N=777$ ); and only non-responders from the lead-in period were randomised (children study  $N=540$ , adolescent study  $N=616$ ).

In the study in children aged 7 to 11 years vortioxetine was not statistically significantly different to placebo based on the Children's Depression Rating Scale-Revised (CDRS-R) total score at week 8, nor was the active reference (fluoxetine 20 mg/day). In general, the adverse event profile of vortioxetine in children was similar to that seen in adults. The most commonly reported adverse

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events (with a cut-off of 5%) in the vortioxetine treatment groups were nausea, headache, vomiting, and abdominal pain.

In the study in adolescents aged 12 to 17 years vortioxetine was not statistically significantly superior to placebo based on the CDRS-R total score at week 8. The active reference (fluoxetine 20 mg/day) separated statistically from placebo on the CDRS-R total score. In general, the adverse event profile of vortioxetine in adolescents was similar to that seen for adults.

Two long-term open-label extension studies were performed with vortioxetine doses of 5 to 20 mg/day and with treatment duration of 6 months (N=662) and 18 months (N=94), respectively. Overall, the safety and tolerability profile of vortioxetine in paediatric patients after long-term use was comparable to what has been observed in paediatric patients after short-term use.

Brintellix is not indicated for use in patients below the age of 18 years.

## 5.2 Pharmacokinetic properties

### Absorption

The maximal plasma vortioxetine concentration ( $C_{max}$ ) after multiple oral doses is reached within 7 to 8 hours post-dose ( $T_{max}$ ). Steady state mean  $C_{max}$  values were 9, 18, and 33 ng/mL following doses of 5, 10, and 20 mg/day. The absolute bioavailability is 75%. No effect of food on the pharmacokinetics was observed.

### Distribution

The mean volume of distribution ( $V_{ss}$ ) from population PK analysis in healthy volunteers is 2,600 L, indicating extensive extravascular distribution. Vortioxetine is highly bound to plasma proteins (98 to 99%) and the binding appears to be independent of vortioxetine plasma concentrations.

### Metabolism

Vortioxetine is extensively metabolised in the liver, primarily through oxidation and subsequent glucuronic acid conjugation. *In vitro* studies indicate that the cytochrome P450 isozymes CYP2D6, CYP3A4/5, CYP2C19, CYP2C9, CYP2A6, CYP2C8 and CYP2B6 are involved in the metabolism of vortioxetine.

No inhibitory or inducing effect of vortioxetine was observed *in vitro* for the CYP isozymes CYP1A2, CYP2A6, CYP2B6, CYP2C8, CYP2C9, CYP2C19, or CYP3A4/5 nor was an inhibitory effect observed *in vitro* for CYP2D6 or CYP2E1. Vortioxetine is a poor P-gp substrate and inhibitor.

The major metabolite of vortioxetine is (Lu AA34443) pharmacologically inactive.

### Excretion

The mean elimination half-life and oral clearance from population PK analysis in healthy volunteers are 66 hours and 33 L/h, respectively.

Approximately 2/3 of the inactive vortioxetine metabolites are excreted in the urine and approximately 1/3 in the faeces. Only negligible amounts of vortioxetine are excreted in the faeces. Steady-state plasma concentrations are achieved in approximately 2 weeks.

### Linearity/non-linearity

The pharmacokinetics is linear and time independent in the dose range studied.

### Pharmacokinetic/pharmacodynamic relationship(s)

There is a curve-linear concentration-response relationship between the plasma concentrations of vortioxetine after single and multiple doses of 2.5 to 60 mg/day and the occupancy of the 5-HT transporter in the brain, as measured using PET.

### Special Populations

#### Elderly Patients

In elderly healthy subjects (aged  $\geq 65$  years; n=20), the exposure to vortioxetine increased up to 27% ( $C_{max}$  and AUC) compared to young healthy control subjects (aged  $\leq 45$  years) after multiple doses of

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10 mg/day. The recommended starting dose is 5 mg vortioxetine once daily in patients  $\geq 65$  years of age (see section [4.2 Dose and method of administration](#)).

## **Renal impairment**

Following a single dose of 10 mg vortioxetine, renal impairment estimated using the Cockcroft-Gault formula (mild, moderate, or severe; n=8 per group) caused modest exposure increases (up to 11%), compared to healthy matched controls. In patients with end-stage renal disease, only a small fraction of vortioxetine was lost during the dialysis process (AUC and  $C_{max}$  were 13% and 27% lower; n=8) following a single 10 mg dose of vortioxetine. No dose adjustment is needed on the basis of renal function, however, caution should be exercised (see section [4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use](#)).

## **Hepatic impairment**

The pharmacokinetics in subjects (N = 6-8) with mild, moderate, or severe hepatic impairment (Child-Pugh Criteria A, B, or C, respectively) were compared to healthy volunteers. After a single dose of 10 or 5 mg, the changes in AUC were less than 10% in subjects with mild or moderate hepatic impairment. Following a single dose of 5 mg, AUC was 44% higher and  $C_{max}$  was 24% lower in those with severe hepatic impairment. No dose adjustment is needed on the basis of hepatic function, however caution should be exercised (see section [4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use](#)).

## **CYP2D6 poor metabolisers**

The plasma concentration of vortioxetine was approximately two times higher in CYP2D6 poor metabolisers than in extensive metabolisers. No dose adjustment is needed (see section [4.2 Dose and method of administration](#)).

## **Gender**

Systemic exposures are similar between males and females of comparable body size and no dose adjustment is needed.

## **Race**

No dose adjustment on the basis of race or ethnicity is needed based on the population PK study. Race or ethnicity had no apparent effect on the pharmacokinetics of vortioxetine.

## **Paediatric population**

Pharmacokinetics of vortioxetine in paediatric patients with major depressive disorder following oral administration of 5 to 20 mg once daily was characterized using population modelling analyses based on data from a pharmacokinetic study (7-17 years) and two efficacy and safety studies (7-17 years). The pharmacokinetics of vortioxetine in paediatric patients was similar to that observed in adult patients.

## **5.3 Preclinical safety data**

### **Genotoxicity**

Vortioxetine was not genotoxic in a bacterial reverse mutation assay and a chromosome aberration assay in human lymphocytes *in vitro* and an *in vivo* micronucleus test.

### **Carcinogenicity**

Two-year carcinogenicity studies were conducted with vortioxetine in mice and rats at doses which achieved exposures (plasma  $C_{max}$ ) well in excess of that at the maximum recommended human dose. Although there were some positive findings (increased incidences of hepatocellular adenomas in rats and in male mice, and of haemangiomas in the mesenteric lymph node and of histiocytic sarcomas in male rats, and of polypoid adenomas in the rectum of female rats). None of these findings were considered to pose a risk of carcinogenicity in humans.

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## 6 PHARMACEUTICAL PARTICULARS

The drug substance is a white to very slightly beige powder. The molecule is not chiral.

Vortioxetine hydrobromide is slightly soluble in water; at ambient temperature solubility is equivalent to approximately 1.3 mg base/mL, pH being 5.5 in the saturated solution. At pH =7.4 the solubility is equivalent to approximately 50 µg base/mL.

Dissociation Constant:  $pK_a = 9.1 (\pm 0.1)$  and  $3.0 (\pm 0.2)$

### Chemical Name:

1-{2-[(2,4-dimethylphenyl)sulfonyl]phenyl}piperazine monohydrobromide

### Molecular formula:

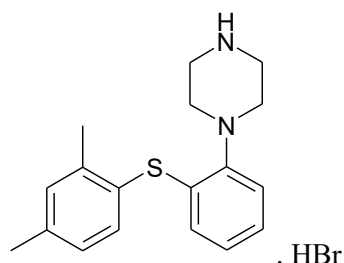
$C_{18}H_{22}N_2S$ , HBr

### Molecular Mass:

The relative molar mass of vortioxetine base is 298.45

The relative molar mass of vortioxetine hydrobromide is 379.36

### Chemical structure



### CAS number

508233-74-7 (vortioxetine base)

960203-27-4 (vortioxetine hydrobromide)

### 6.1 List of excipients

Brintellix film-coated tablets contain mannitol, microcrystalline cellulose, hypromellose, sodium starch glycolate type A, magnesium stearate, hypromellose, titanium dioxide, Macrogol 400, iron oxide red (5, 15 and 20 mg tablets) and iron oxide yellow (10 and 15 mg tablets). Brintellix does not contain lactose, gluten, sucrose, tartrazine or any other azo dyes.

### 6.2 Incompatibilities

Refer to section [4.5 Interaction with other medicines and other forms of interaction](#).

### 6.3 Shelf life

4 years

### 6.4 Special precautions for storage

Store below 30°C.

### 6.5 Nature and contents of container

Blister packs: Transparent; PVC/PVdC/aluminium blister.

Pack sizes of 7 (10 mg only) and 28 film-coated tablets (all strengths).

### 6.6 Special precautions for disposal

Any unused medicine or waste material should be disposed of in accordance with local requirements.

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## 7 MEDICINE SCHEDULE

S4 - Prescription only medicine

## 8 SPONSOR

### New Zealand Sponsor:

Pharmacy Retailing t/a Healthcare Logistics  
58 Richard Pearse Drive,  
Mangere  
Auckland 2022  
Ph: 0800 540 555

## 9 DATE OF FIRST APPROVAL

5 March 2020

## 10 DATE OF REVISION OF THE TEXT

09 January 2026

### Summary table of changes

Section Changed	Summary of new information
All	Minor editorial revisions.
4.2, 4.8	Update of information relating to discontinuation symptoms of Brintellix.
4.6	Update of lactation information.

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